

Northwest Subcommittee

Summary of Subcommittee Input

The Northwest Subcommittee was challenged with discussing the largest geographical area in this subcommittee process. The area is roughly bound by 216th Street to the north, Hamilton-Boone Road to the west, SR 32 to the south, and US 31 to the east. The northwest quadrant of Washington Township is largely agricultural in nature. The area also contains the four named village communities in the township, Hortonville, Lamong, Eagletown, and Jolietville.

The potential future implementation of the County Thoroughfare Plan was of great concern to the group. The potential roadway upgrades and potential roadway extensions were identified and used as a basis for a lot of the discussion. The Towne Road extension and upgrade to a primary arterial and the 206th Street upgrade to a primary arterial were expressed concerns by this group.

The committee also discussed the idea of locating business/commercial development along the existing corridors of US 31 and SR 32; agricultural-related businesses were discussed as an exception to this rule.

The four named communities of Hortonville, Lamong, Eagletown, and Jolietville were discussed as possible locations for commercial development as well. The committee's discussions focused on neighborhood, pedestrian-oriented businesses in these communities. The character, quality, and scale of future development were very important to the group. They expressed the desire to allow only appropriate uses that afford the neighborhood-oriented, walk-able character. High architectural and site design standards were discussed as a means to achieve this goal.

The group expressed the desire to maintain the existing rural character of the quadrant by exploring the idea of transferable development rights (TDR). Essentially, TDR allows the development rights of Property A to be transferred to Property B, leaving the possibility of Property B to develop with a higher intensity than normally allowed and Property A to be developed with a lesser intensity than normally allowed. This tool allows for the preservation of land while utilizing its rightful development potential elsewhere in the jurisdiction. The State of Indiana currently does not allow TDR by State legislation; however, the group would like to see the possibility of this land use tool explored at the State legislative level. The committee members saw the potential of this tool being used to preserve the rural character of the quadrant while building more intensely in the four named village communities.

Another method that was discussed for protecting and maintaining the rural character of the area is to locate and cluster developments internally toward a project, leaving greenspace and open space along the primary road network. The potential loss of farmland and the right to farm was discussed at great length as well. Many in the group expressed the desire to keep the area rural and agricultural. The TDR and clustering of development discussions resulted as a potential compromise between those in the group that advocated for farmland preservation and those in the group that advocated for a property owner's right to sell land for development. This topic deserves more deliberation at the Steering Committee level.

The committee members expressed the desire to maintain and preserve the existing environmental amenities to the area, including: mature trees, streams and creeks, and topographic features. The committee also expressed the desire to protect older structures/buildings (including barns) that were built prior to the 20th century – these structures are viewed as sacred by the members of the committee. They felt that this would help maintain and protect the existing character of the area.

The committee also discussed the desire to have greater involvement and input in future site-specific development as it penetrates this quadrant. The idea of requiring developers to meet

with neighbors before entering the Town's approval process was discussed at length. The group generally gave consensus for this idea as a potential policy statement for the future growth of this area.

An overarching issue that concerned the committee was the implementation and administration of the new comprehensive plan upon its completion and adoption. The committee stressed the fact that, in order for the new plan to be effective and viable, it must be supported by ordinance revisions which reflect the new policy direction as stated in the new plan.

The attached pages are the notes from all of the meetings of this subcommittee. The notes outline the meeting discussions.

Northwest Subcommittee

The committee was charged with identifying planning and development issues that pertain to the Northwest quadrant of the township. They were also charged with coming up with a vision statement for the future development of the area. The vision statement exercise began with each individual member writing their vision. Then members were paired with another person and charged to combine their two vision statements into one. Then, the groups of two were paired with another group of two to make groups of four – the same exercise of combining statements into one was applied. After continuing the exercise one more round, two groups of eight each came up with a vision statement. The notes below reflect the final vision statement, as derived from the two groups of eight participants.

Planning Issues:

- Loss of farmland
- Transitions to the business park area
- Implementation is an immediate need
- Greatest growth potential
- Create Identity
- Jewel of Hamilton County (character)
- Peaceful
- Night sky
- Developer interest competing with citizen interest
- Open space without control of property
- Quality vs. quantity
- Density and traffic that comes with development
- Having neighbors of similar circumstances
- Speed limit violations in Hortonville
- Airport

Vision Statement:

- Maintain view of sky and greenspaces with restricted lighting
- Farms maintained
- Larger lots
- Rural setting (3-5 acre lots)
- Businesses limited to existing corridors (SR 32, US 31, Eagletown, Jolietville, Hortonville, Lamong) –
 - Except for agricultural related businesses
- Maintain existing topography
- Preserve mature tree stands
- Develop parks for a sense of community
- Ok to drive for basic needs
- Want greater voice given to adjacent property owners when facing development pressure
 - More than certified mail
 - Collaborative efforts
- Pedestrian connectivity
 - Monon and other opportunities
 - Relieves reliance on automobiles
- Pre-1901 structures are sacred

- Gateway to agriculture
- Concern over current administration of PUD ordinance
- Transferable Development Rights

September 1, 2005
Christ Community Church – Lamong

Northwest Subcommittee

The subcommittee performed a S.W.O.T. analysis on the northwest quadrant. A S.W.O.T. analysis looks at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats towards a community. This exercise was performed as one large group. Under each heading, the top two or three issues were identified by group consensus. Some issues were combined during the ranking process because they are similarly related or address a similar issue.

Strengths:

1. Lots of land for opportunities
 1. Open spaces
 1. Ability to farm (drive the roads with farm equipment, make an income, tolerance of livestock)
 1. All 3 Hamilton County dairy opportunities are here
2. Small 'towns' (Jolietville, Eagletown, Hortonville, Lamong)
3. Friendliness
- Proximity to necessities – not fighting for traffic
- Beauty of the area – diversity in architecture
- Mature trees and wetlands
- Accessibility – U.S. 31 to other highways (I-69 and I-65)
- Low crime rate – with the exception of mailbox bashing
- Peaceful

Weaknesses:

1. Increased property taxes – schools
2. No Transferable Development Rights legislation
- 2. Money talks and the developers have money
- Poor emergency response
- Lack of common vision – divergent expectations of land owners (lifestyle vs. lottery)
- New-comer expectations
 - Want to influence the world to conform to them
 - Exploitation of land (buy, divide, build, move)
- Need more non-residential development
- Need better indication of fiscal impact
- Lack of "move-up"/intermediate homes

Opportunities:

1. Develop a sense of place in the 4 named communities
 - Develop flavor/character of those places
 - Protect/promote agricultural history
- 1. Maintain rural ground
- 1. Good design
2. Monon equestrian trail
3. Learn from mistakes of other communities
- Transferable Development Rights legislation
- Preserve a broad-range of lifestyle opportunities
- Airport
- Quaint agricultural-related businesses
- Get rich from land sales
- Preserve old-growth trees

- Preserve old structures
- Non-residential business development at the airport

Threats:

1. Westfield governance – lack of representation
 2. Increased traffic/population
 3. Tax increases
- Rising fuel costs and the impact that has on development
 - Loss of “small town” feel
 - Business owners not being involved in the community
 - Eminent domain (referencing the recent Supreme Court ruling)
 - Poor future roadway design
 - Pace of development
 - Development (in general)
 - Airport
 - Sheridan growth
 - Cost of farming in the face of development costs

September 8, 2005
Christ Community Church – Lamong

Northwest Subcommittee

Attendees were presented maps of the existing land uses for their geographic area, and challenged to choose appropriate sites for each of five land use types: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, and Parks. The group decided to add a sixth land use category, Agricultural. The committee spent time locating each of the six land uses within the northwest area. When locating the different uses, the group considered the location of existing and proposed thoroughfares, the need for public services in the area, the idea of multi-family and recreational spaces as transitional buffers, and the desire to preserve the rural/agricultural nature of the area. At the next meeting, the committee will discuss the criterion they used for locating the various land uses within their area.

September 15, 2005
Christ Community Church – Lamong

Northwest Subcommittee

This meeting continued the discussions that had begun the previous week. The committee discussed the land use criterion in detail. They discussed residential uses, commercial uses, industrial uses, institutional uses, and recreational uses at the meeting.

Residential

- MF on primary arterials.
- Priority: Enforcement of appearance and building safety code
- Net average of “x” density to allow for shifting of density within project
 - Perimeter green space to maintain sense of openness – character issue
- Front doors to the street
- Fewer dead-ends – grid-iron
- Access alignment across streets
 - Considerate of property across street
- Consistent street names
- Explore TDR
- Quality of design and building materials

Commercial

- Use frontage roads on 31/32. Access control
 - Locate frontage roads between out lots and anchors
- Consider mixed use at Monon and arterials
- Four Hamlets – multi-use (mixed)
- Character and architecture very important to identity
- Connectivity of adjacent property
- Build to the topography where practicable

Industrial

- Not next to residential
- Light, enclosed
- Buffer heavier uses (inside cluster) by lighter uses (outside)
- Need a plan for relocating some existing uses
- Light pollution control
- Better softscape design on perimeter
 - Overall design of industrial areas
 - ‘Park 100’ is good example
- Sufficient road infrastructure needed

Institutional

- Locate where needed along with development
- Provide along with development
- Maintain/consider pre-existing churches, important structures
 - Protect sense of history/charm
- Cluster?, consider access
- Medical uses near north end (US 31)

Parks/Recreation

- Conserve “old growth” trees
- Consider larger parks/recreation facilities
 - Habig fields example
- Transition uses
- Incorporate bike/equestrian trails into new development
 - Plan the network
 - Consider implementation plan

Other Thoughts

- Fiscal impact of development
- Right to farm
- Developer needs to partner with adjacent land owners
 - Greater advance notice

September 22, 2005
Christ Community Church – Lamong

Northwest Subcommittee

This was the final meeting of the Northwest subcommittee. All attendees were given a copy of the draft report and were asked to review it for corrections and changes. The committee asked that the development of the four named villages be addressed more in the report. They also wanted the report to reflect the committee's desire to see changes to the zoning ordinances so the code supports the new policy that this comprehensive plan update will provide. Changes to the draft report will be made by staff and distributed back to the committee for their review before the report is sent to the Steering Committee.